

# Rep. Bowen: Statement on reintroduction of Indigenous Peoples Day bill

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MILWAUKEE – In recognition of the reintroduction earlier today of LRB-4949, his bill proposal to rename Columbus Day in Wisconsin as Indigenous Peoples Day, State Rep. David Bowen (D-Milwaukee) released the following statement:

“Today, I am honored to reintroduce LRB-4949, my bipartisan proposal to rename Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day. Ever since my first meeting with students from the Indian Community School back in my first term as a State Representative, I have made it my mission to see this important and overdue change come to fruition. When Christopher Columbus reached the Caribbean in 1492, he ‘discovered’ a part of the world that had thriving, technologically-advanced societies and millions of inhabitants who already called it home. And while some may think of Columbus’s legacy as one of discovery, our Indigenous and African-American communities know that the explorer’s legacy is also one of genocide and slavery. Instead of celebrating the tainted legacy of a man who never even reached the continental United States, it is past time we instead chose to honor the Native communities and Indigenous peoples who have and continue to contribute so much to our great state.”

Introduced earlier this morning with a bipartisan group of 25 legislators, LRB-4949 would amend state statute to formally rename Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

“I applaud Governor Evers & now President Biden for proclaiming today Indigenous Peoples Day at the state and federal levels, but we know that executive recognition can unfortunately be fleeting, depending who is in office. That is why it is so

important to see LRB-4949 not only make it through the Committee process this Session, but to have this bill come to the Floor of the Legislature for a vote. I have introduced this bill every Session since I was first elected, and I am proud to have introduced it today with the largest group of initial co-authors yet. This change is the right change to make, and with this undeniable show of support, it is clear that the time is right as well. This Session, let's finally pass LRB-4949 and make Wisconsin the next state to formally recognize Indigenous Peoples Day!"